



# THE CHOATE NEWS

THE OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF CHOATE ROSEMARY HALL SINCE 1907

Choate Rosemary Hall  
333 Christian Street  
Wallingford, CT

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THECHOATENews.CHOATE.EDU

## Celebrating this Decade

### Cohesion and Culture

Choate cultivates a vibrant community of principled individuals from diverse backgrounds and unites them through common purpose, active engagement, and mutual respect. We value shared experiences and traditions that shape character, build cohesion, generate school spirit, and foster lifelong connections.

### Teaching and Learning

Choate provides students with transformative and meaningful experiences that instill lifelong habits of learning, leadership, and service, shaped by innovative and passionate educators. We will continue to identify, promote, and enhance distinctive characteristics of the overall student experience.

### Enrollment and Student Outcomes

Choate is committed to enrolling exceptional students and preparing them to achieve success in higher education, to be adaptable in a rapidly changing world, to improve the communities in which they live, and to find fulfillment in their chosen pursuits.

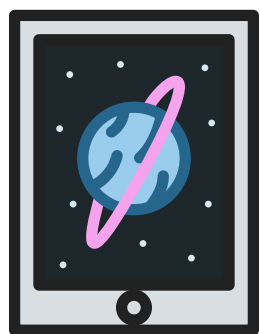
### Communications and Outreach

Choate will capitalize on traditional media and emerging technologies to communicate the exciting and innovative nature of campus life with constituents and the broader world.

2013

#### 1:1 iPad Program

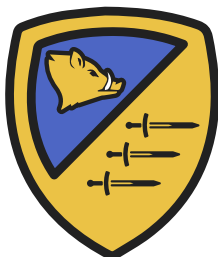
The 1:1 iPad program allows students to integrate new technology with more advanced teaching methods and platforms for students. Today, all students are provided with iPads for use in classrooms across campus.



2013

#### Visual Identity Revamp

The administration introduces changes to the School's official crest and a new school shield. These changes carry over to major overhauls of digital branding and athletic teams. Furthermore, the School's Communications Office implements a new brand and editorial style guide.



2013

#### Reconfiguration of Dean Faculty's Office

In addition to the Dean of Faculty position, the Office adds a Director of Curricular Initiatives; a Director of Faculty Development; a Director of Studies; and a Director of Global Programs.

2014

#### Statement of Expectations

A single document that outlines community-wide expectations that should be upheld by students and faculty. The Statement of Expectations promotes a collective responsibility to promote a culture defined by integrity, honor, ethical behavior, and good decision-making.

2015

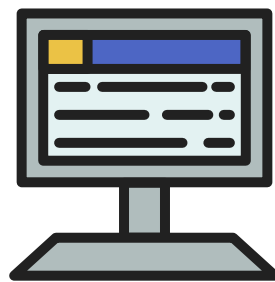
#### Murata US-Japan Scholarship Established

Takashi Murata '93 pioneers a scholarship that encourages Japanese students to enroll in both Choate Summer Programs and the full academic year.

2015

#### Redesigned Website

A modern overhaul of the School's website earns www.choate.edu Best School Mobile Website Award from the Web Marketing Association.



2015

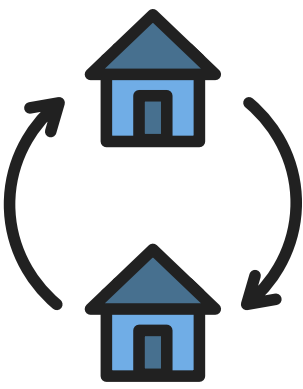
#### Office of Institutional Research

Mr. Corey Wrinn is appointed to lead as the Director of Institutional Research to collect and utilize institutional data, including longitudinal studies, to assess and enhance student outcomes.

2015

#### Residential Life Tiered Housing Lottery

A new tiered system is introduced in order to create more opportunities for continuity in advising. Since 2015, two-thirds of fourth form students have been able to return to the same house for their fifth form year.



2016

#### Office of Equity and Inclusion

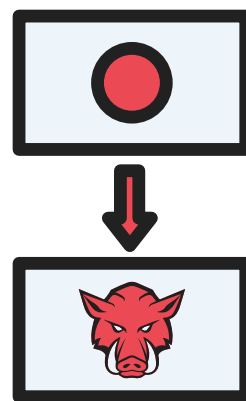
Choate reaffirms its commitment to diversity with the appointment of Dr. Keith Hinderlie as the School's first Director of Equity and Inclusion, overseeing diversity initiatives, community service, spiritual life, and the Pathways program. In 2019, Mr. Fillipe Camorotti was appointed as Assistant Director.



2016

#### TABS Initiative

Choate takes a leadership role in supporting TABS' (The Association of Boarding Schools) North American Boarding Initiative, supporting industry-wide efforts to raise awareness of boarding schools across the continent. In 2017, Head of School Dr. Alex Curtis joined the organization's board.



2016

#### Degendering of Dean Groups

Dean groups are degendered in 2016 to help better support students. The Class of 2018 was the last class to be divided based on gender. All-gender housing was provided as an option in 2019.

2015

#### NEASC Self-study Program

For the 10-year New England Association of Schools and Colleges accreditation process, NEASC visiting team in 2017-18 makes recommendations and concludes that Choate exceeds expectations in the evaluation and accreditation process.

2017

#### Wellness Program Overhauled

The lifelong wellness program is introduced to underformers as a stand-alone program during the class day, alongside a community-wide initiative once a term.

2018

#### Case Excellence Award for Educational Fundraising

Over a three-year period, Choate demonstrates continued growth with contributions totaling nearly \$70 million including a total of \$18 million for the Annual Fund.

2017

#### Bulletin Survey

A survey for The Bulletin, Choate's alumni magazine, shows that 94% of its readership agrees that the magazine strengthens their connection to their alma mater and keeps them updated with events at school. In 2018, the Bulletin receives silver and gold Brilliance awards for design from InspirED School Marketers.

2017

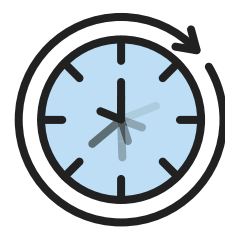
#### New Daily Schedule Introduced

In order to better adjust for the pace of student life on campus and enhance teaching and learning, the administration introduces a new daily schedule that includes 70-minute class blocks that meet three times a week, lunch blocks for all students, and at least one sleep-in each week.

2019

#### Accessibility and Affordability

Tuition increase is held under 3% for the fifth consecutive year. Financial aid budget increases to \$12.4 million.



2018

#### Targeting Emerging Markets

Admission, Communications, and Institutional Research teams use research and demographic trends to target potential emerging markets through social media, direct outreach, and marketing efforts.

2019

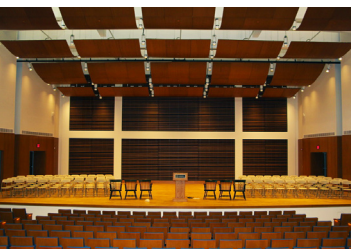
#### Admission Selectivity Peaks

Choate reaches its lowest acceptance rate in history, 16.7%, with more than 2,600 applicants from 80 countries and 49 states, including Washington, D.C.

### A Decade in Review

We editors look back on ten years of triumphs and setbacks.

Opinions Campus • P4



### A Tumultuous Ten

Eight students discuss their impressions of the past decade.

Opinions N/W • P5

### Ventre Passes the Torch

Once Mr. Phil Ventre retires this spring, Mr. Jim Davidson will become Faculty Marshall.

Arts and Leisure • P7



### Athletic Turnover

Mr. Roney Eford took over the Athletic Department in 2017.

Sports • P8

### What's Inside

School News.....	1-2
Local News.....	3
Opinions: Campus.....	4
Opinions: Nation/World.....	5
Features.....	6
Arts and Leisure.....	7
Sports.....	8



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## FIRST-YEAR CHOATE QUIZ BOWL TEAMS QUALIFY FOR NATIONALS

By **Sidharth Rao '23**  
*Reporter*

At the Harvard Fall Tournament XIV in November, two of the three participating Choate Quiz Bowl teams placed fifth and sixth, both qualifying for the National Scholastic Championship in Chicago this upcoming June.

Choate Quiz Bowl is a new club on campus that trains people for Quiz Bowl competitions, where teams compete head-to-head to answer questions ranging from science to pop culture. Emma Hermacinski '22, one of the two Choate Quiz Bowl co-captains, said, "In our meetings, we practice Quiz Bowl rounds, give short presentations on topics we're passionate about, and have an all-around radical time."

Hermacinski and Anya Miksovsky '20 began planning for the creation of Choate Quiz Bowl in the spring term of last year in an effort to bring Quiz Bowl to Choate students and share the experiences they had in competition before coming to Choate. Hermacinski, who has participated in both Quiz Bowl and the National History Bee, said, "I really missed that experience when I got to Choate. When I was talking with Anya one day last spring, we noted how strange it was that we had so many clubs and teams at Choate yet no Quiz Bowl, and that inspired us to get this club off the ground."

The Harvard Fall Tournament hosted 28 teams of four to six members each, and the top seven teams qualified for Nationals. Hermacinski said, "Nationals is a place only for the best of the best, and we're certainly not expecting to take away any titles, but as a new team, we're very excited for

the learning experience and to gain a better understanding of how to be a great Quiz Bowl team." Team Axolotl, which placed fifth, included Andrew Mi '20, Andrew Lee '21, Hermacinski, and Miksovsky. Team Pterodactyl, which placed sixth, included Chandler Littleford '20, Lucas Eggers '21, Jon Geller '20, and Nathan Nicholas '23.

The Harvard tournament consisted of multiple rounds that eventually divided the teams into brackets, with the top winner's bracket containing all but one of the final qualifying teams. During each round, two teams competed to answer a set of twenty questions. Each of the twenty consists of a ten-point toss-up question, which both of the teams in a given round can buzz in to answer, followed by three ten-point bonus questions which can only be answered by the team that correctly answered the toss-up.

A two-time Indianapolis Quiz Bowl League champion, Hermacinski plans to help Choate students become great Quiz Bowl competitors. She and Miksovsky are taking Choate teams to the Livingston Novice Tournament in January and organizing an intramural tournament at Choate later this term.

Jon Geller '20, a member of Team Pterodactyl, said, "It was really surprising but really exciting that even for our first tournament we were still performing just as well as these other teams that have been going for years. I think it helped that we didn't take ourselves too seriously, and we were more concerned with having fun than we were with showing off."

**Sidharth Rao** may be reached at [srao23@choate.edu](mailto:srao23@choate.edu)

## WILL GREVE '20 TO ATTEND WORLD DEBATE CHAMPIONSHIP

By **Nathan Nicholas '23**  
*Reporter*

After winning the title of First Place Advanced Speaker at the St. Paul's School Debate Tournament in November, Will Greve '20 qualified for the American team that will compete at this year's World Individual Debating and Public Speaking Championship (WID-PSC). Running from April 8 to April 15, in Shanghai, China, the tournament will consist of four events: Debate; Impromptu Speaking; Interpretive Reading; and Persuasive Speaking or After-Dinner Speaking.

Greve expressed his gratitude for Andrew Mi '20 — who was his debate partner at St. Paul's and is Choate debate's co-vice-captain — as well as Emma Hermacinski '22 and Conor Brown '22, who helped prepare the case and write speeches that the four used at the tournament. "I found out [about my qualification] from a friend at St. Paul's ... my first reaction was definitely one of disbelief, because it just seemed so unlikely. But later, when we got the official results, I was actually very relieved. I've been doing this for a while so it feels good to finally pull it off," commented Greve on the moment he heard the results.

St. Paul's is the only Oregon-style prepared debate tournament that Choate attends throughout the entire year, a debate style in which debaters are given the resolution around a month beforehand to prepare and build their cases for both the affirmative and negative sides. This year's resolution was "Resolved, that

the United States government should implement a plan to transition to 100% clean energy by 2030." Throughout the course of the day, each debate pair went through three rounds of debate, with the debater with the highest total speaker points placing first.

Though Greve had an interest in debate before coming to Choate, he initially had trouble getting involved. He said, "I wasn't very confident speaking in front of a room, and I had a hard time developing arguments and really engaging in competitive debate." He began competing in debate tournaments his sophomore year.

Greve credits the people he met at Choate debate meetings with inspiring him to continue practicing. "I got lucky, and my first practice debate was with a really fun group of people. I enjoyed it a lot and wanted to learn more. I had the privilege of working with a number of really talented students in the forms above me, all of whom taught me a lot about both public speaking and argumentation."

As a debate pod leader and vice-captain, Greve aims to provide younger students with the same environment and experiences that he found helpful when he first began. For students new to debate, Greve said, "Throw yourself into it. It can seem intimidating at first, but everyone has to start somewhere. I implore anyone with even a passing interest in debate to go to a meeting and try it out — it's really never too late to start learning."

Greve noted that debate has not only enhanced his abilities to think critically and formulate arguments but also



Photo by **Amitra Hoq**/*The Choate News*

Will Greve joined his first Choate debate pod two years ago.

boosted his confidence in public speaking and other aspects of his life.

By qualifying for Worlds, Greve has achieved a goal three years in the making. "Overall, I'm just really happy to get a chance to go, because it's something I've wanted to do ever since Charlie Yockey '18 and Baji Tumendemberel '19 qualified my fourth form year," he said.

"Debate has been an incredibly significant part of my life, and it's involved countless weekday evenings and early Sunday mornings over the past three years," said Greve. "However, I've truly enjoyed the experience, and I wouldn't change anything about it."

**Nathan Nicholas** may be reached at [nnicholas23@choate.edu](mailto:nnicholas23@choate.edu)

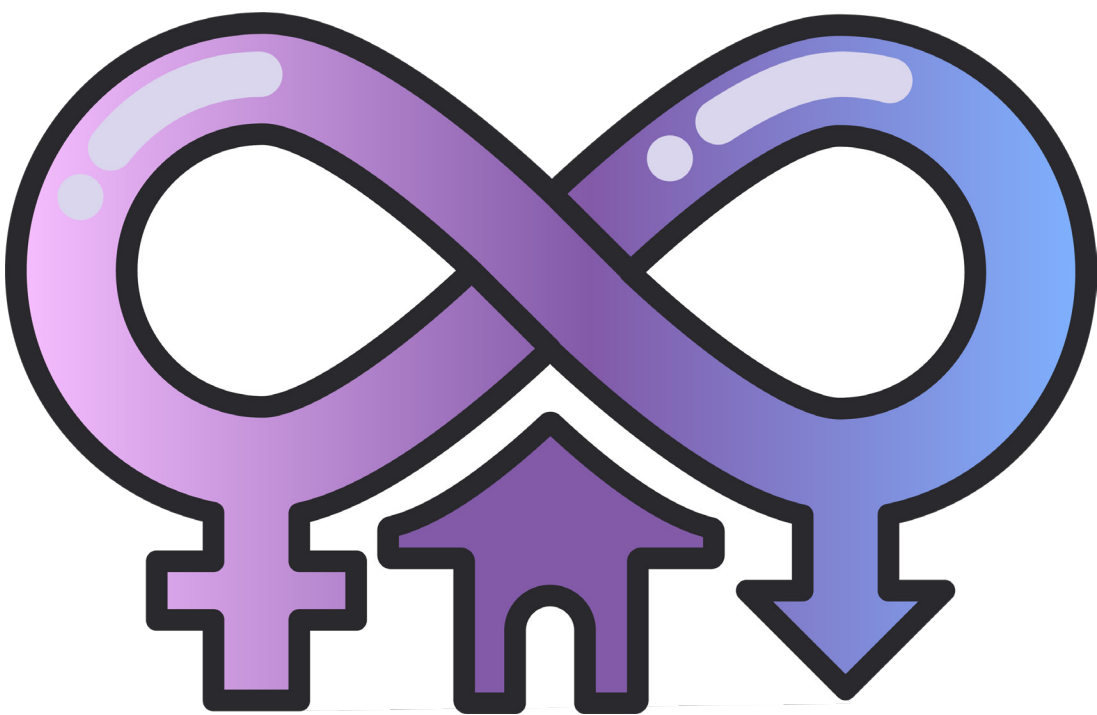
## Choate's All-Gender Dorm Pilot Reflects on Beginnings

By **JeeHwan Kim '21**  
*Associate Editor*

Choate has implemented many changes throughout the past year, one of the most significant being the creation of the first all-gender dorm in Combination House. Officially piloted this academic year, the all-gender dorm was originally planned to be in Edsall. However, housing shifts caused by the Hill House lightning strike over the summer resulted in a relocation to Combination House. Currently, six juniors and two prefects live in the dorm with Head of House Mr. Mike Velez.

According to Mr. Velez, the goal of establishing an all-gender dorm was to "create a safe and inclusive space for students who identify across the gender spectrum and peer allies." In the beginning of the year, he facilitated a conversation with the prefects, Nico Decker '20 and Will Robertson '20, about group values. He expressed that they have both "truly helped to set a positive atmosphere for the dorm."

The students in Combination House have stated that they have been enjoying dorm life this year and have built a tight-knit community. Dey Wallace-McKinstry '21, a current resident of the dorm, said, "It's been a more fun experience than I ever thought it



Graphic by **Chandler Littleford**/*The Choate News*

would be. We've all gotten really close, and I've never felt so connected with every single person in my dorm."

Eliza Marovitz '21, another resident, said, "It feels more normal than living in a single-gender dorm."

According to Marovitz, the house rules were established by the current members of the new dorm. One important component to the rules, which was also a major topic of discussion, was visitation: "In the beginning of the year, we met in Mr. Velez's apartment, and we talked for about an hour," Marovitz said. The students

helped to shape the policies they follow. "We went really in-depth, talking about all the different possibilities. The intention was that we would help create the rules."

The current rule states that students must get visitation regardless of who they bring into the dorm. "It's the idea that you aren't saying something about yourself by bringing in someone, and you're not saying something about who you're bringing in," Marovitz said.

Though residents have expressed that the all-gender dorm has been a positive addition to the campus over-

all, they have also stated that there is still much room for improvement. Marovitz explained that she dislikes the fact that boys and girls are separated by floors. "Because we were rushed for time with Hill House, we ended up having all girls living on one floor and boys living on another floor. The way we are with this group of people works well, but I just think that this shouldn't become a trend," she said. She also hopes that the option to apply to live in the dorm will be offered to new students in addition to returning students.

Mr. Velez felt that his main challenge as the first Head of House of Combination was maintaining a balance between upholding the pilot guidelines while remaining open to proposed student feedback and making helpful adjustments.

He noted, however, that he is very pleased with how students have responded to the experience of living in the new dorm. "The group continues to find ways to make the dorm feel more like home by organizing meetings and dorm events, rearranging the small common space that exists, and coming up with ways to engage others in the community in healthy and positive ways," said Mr. Velez.

Both Marovitz and Wallace-McKinstry hope that more members of the Choate community will be interested in be-

coming involved in future years. They emphasized that the opportunity is available for anyone who would like to participate.

Wallace-McKinstry added, "I just think that more people should see this as a fun opportunity to learn more about other genders and about yourself, and I think a lot of people steered away last year because they thought it would all be about LGBTQ+ people."

Mr. Velez plans to discuss the future of the all-gender house with Director of Residential Life Mr. Will Morris to help enhance students' experiences in the dorm. He looks forward to working to build upon the student feedback from this academic year.

**JeeHwan Kim** may be reached at [jkim21@choate.edu](mailto:jkim21@choate.edu)

Built in 2012 by Robert A.M. Stern Architects and headed by Associate Head of School Ms. Kathleen Wallace, the Kohler Environmental Center (KEC) was created as an opportunity for students to experience interdisciplinary environmental immersion. Certified LEED Platinum, the building was also featured at the World Architecture Festival in 2013. Featuring three working laboratories, two classrooms, and a greenhouse, the KEC houses the Environmental Immersion Program (EIP), allowing fifth and sixth form students to engage in a year-long program of intensive environmental-oriented classes and research programs.

In 2011, Dr. Alex Curtis took up the mantle of Head of School from Dr. Edward Shanahan, who had served since 1991.

In 2011, the School launched the Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies Program (AMES) with the goal of teaching students about the Middle East through guided study of Modern Standard Arabic, history, art, architecture, and politics.

2012 saw the creation of Choate's first Office of Global Programs with Mr. James Anderson as Director.





# A Decade of Development for the Wallingford Community



In the past decade (from left to right), Lyman Hall reconstructed its track; Wallingford endured Hurricane Irene; and the Bristol-Myers Squibb building was demolished.

By **Peter DiNatale '21** and **Amanda Li '21**  
*Associate Editors*

Over the past decade, citizens of Wallingford have seen significant changes within the town. Food and living preferences have evolved; new establishments have been added; and several public facilities have been improved. Aside from major improvements, buildings have also been reconstructed and renovated due to severe weather. Perhaps more so than its surrounding towns, Wallingford has undergone an eventful past ten years.

## PREFERENCES

Throughout this past decade, the demand for residential property has risen dramatically, while the number of commercial office spaces has dropped. According to Mr. Jon Walworth, architect and former member of Wallingford’s Parks & Recreation Commision, “Office spaces located in small towns are no longer appealing to citizens. Smaller towns, like Wallingford, are adapting gradually towards residential in place of commercial office space.” To capitalize on the increased demand, Wallingford has implemented a zoning regulation called Incentive Housing Zone (IHZ), which increases the amount of area available for residential units. This regulation led to the construction of a new apartment complex near the Wallingford train station.

Aside from a greater demand for residential units, Wallingford has also seen large changes in its food scene. Over the past decade, several pizza restaurants have closed. Today, twelve remain in Wallingford. Meanwhile, Asian cuisine has grown in popularity as new Asian restaurants, such as Funju Noodle Bar, Za-Onn Thai House, Panda Garden, and Hot Pot, have spread through the Wallingford-Yalesville area. “I am a landlord in town and have experienced, first-hand, the weakening pizza market in Wallingford. I had a pizza restaurant and an Asian restaurant open in my plaza. The pizza place, formerly known as Jimmy’s Pizza was not successful. On the other hand, the Asian restaurant is still open and doing well to this day,” said a local landlord who asked to remain anonymous.

## CONSTRUCTION

Wallingford citizens have also witnessed a series of public facility renovations and the construction of new establishments in town. The first major construction project this past decade was the reconstruction of the Lyman Hall track. The Wallingford Board of Education began planning for this addition in 2013 and completed the process in 2015. “The new track was definitely a major school improvement. After our track and football field was completed, it caused more kids to play sports for Lyman Hall. It really makes kids take pride in putting on an LH jersey or uniform,” said Aidan Weir, a junior at Lyman Hall High School. The school now hosts track and field meets as well as football games on the new track area.

In further efforts to improve public facilities over the past decade, in 2017, the engineering department completed its largest project of the decade: a new train station that connects Wallingford to stations from New Haven to Springfield, Mass. The station not only facilitates transportation for commuting residents but also attracts new residents to Wallingford. “The railroad station was really a dramatic change in downtown Wallingford. The final product was also a very nice design, like something we would see in Europe, perhaps,” said Mr. Walworth.

## WEATHER

From Hurricane Irene in 2011 to the recent tornado in 2018, Wallingford has experienced its fair share of weather crises this past decade. Fortunately, according to Mayor Dickinson, the town budget has been designed to reserve funds for these emergencies so that they may be assessed and addressed in a timely manner. However, these disasters have still led to much inconvenience for town residents.

In 2011, Hurricane Irene caused a mandatory evacuation in Wallingford, and all public transportation was suspended. According to *Wallingford Politico*, damages from this storm cost Wallingford around \$900,000. Wallingford also experienced two major snowstorms in 2011, one in January and one in October, leaving many neighborhoods without power. Later, in February of 2013, another snowstorm led to 40 inches of snow and a four-day closure of schools and transportation systems.

## ECONOMY

At the start of the decade, Wallingford was still recovering from the 2008 recession, with many businesses on the brink of closing. As the decade progressed, economic conditions improved, and, according to Mayor William Dickinson, the unemployment rate in Wallingford fell to 4.5%.

In recent years, the departure of several large businesses has impacted the Wallingford economy. In 2018, the relocation of Bristol-Myers Squibb and Edible Arrangements led to the loss of more than 1,000 jobs. However, Wallingford has retained its economic stability with the support of other large companies, including BYK Additives and Instruments and the Amphehol Corporation.

Due to the loss of these larger businesses, the Wallingford Economic Development Commission has renewed its interest in supporting small businesses in town. In 2018 alone, Wallingford welcomed 116 new businesses. Many of the restaurants frequented by Choate students have opened this past decade, including Mr. D’s, which opened in 2010, and the Library Wine Bar and Bistro, which opened in 2015.

## TECHNOLOGY

Accompanying this decade’s technological boom, the Wallingford community has adapted to the changing modern world. In 2016, the Wallingford Public Library underwent a \$460,000 renovation project to create the “Collaboratory,” a makerspace that features modern technology such as a laser cutter, long arm quilting machine, and 55-inch Microsoft Surface Hub touchscreen monitor. In the past five years, the library has also added a variety of online resources from movie and TV show access to a Minecraft server for younger visitors.

Using Doordash and Uber Eats, apps launched in 2013 and 2014 respectively, local business have reached more customers around Wallingford. Many local residents have also become part-time or full-time Uber drivers. Furthermore, the town recently launched new initiatives to support the growth of STEM programs such as the Wallingford Robotics Club and the STEM Academy, which aims to give students interested in STEM the opportunity to deepen their knowledge outside of the regular school curriculum.

**Peter DiNatale** may be reached at [pdinatale21@choate.edu](mailto:pdinatale21@choate.edu), and **Amanda Li** may be reached at [ali21@choate.edu](mailto:ali21@choate.edu)

# RACIST POSTERS APPEAR ON WALLINGFORD STREETS

By **Rachel Pittman '22**  
*Associate Editor*

On November 12, Wallingford police responded to reports of flyers reading “IT’S OKAY TO BE WHITE” posted on stop signs and street lights throughout town, concentrated primarily on Christian and Center Streets. According to Wallingford Police Chief William Wright, “A call came into the Dispatch Center from a resident in town who stated that they had seen a few postings on town-owned utility posts.” After the Wallingford Police removed these posters, more posters appeared that were also removed.

The Wallingford Town Council has formally condemned the behavior as an act of racism. In a statement released on behalf of the Town Council, Chairman Vincent Cervoni wrote, “We who are Wallingford do not support

any discrimination based upon race, color, creed, or national origin.”

At the moment, the Wallingford police department has not identified the organization responsible for the posters. “There was some sense that these posters have been seen nationwide,” said Chief Wright. However, even if the culprit is identified, the police department will not be able to charge them with a hate crime because the posters technically do not target a group of people.

After the Wallingford police removed the flyers, the Choate Equity and Inclusion Team worked closely with the Wallingford police to speak out against the actions and ensure the safety of students. On the collaboration, Chief Wright said that he and Mrs. Alison Cady, the School’s Director of Strategic Planning and Communications “had con-

versations about the posters on more than one occasion ... Alison expressed the concerns of the Choate community to us, and I gave her some information that I believed would be helpful.”

Following these conversations, Director of Equity and Inclusion Dr. Keith Hinderlie wrote in a school-wide email, “[The phrase] is a message designed to provoke reactions, promote white nationalism, and instill fear among people of color.” He emphasized, “We unequivocally condemn these acts and stand firmly against all forms of racism.” The School has received no further reports of intolerant transgressions following the incident.

The Wallingford Police Department has assured the School that there is no reason to believe that the posters are directed at the Choate commu-

nity, despite their proximity to campus. Nevertheless, Dr. Hinderlie urged students, especially day students who travel through town regularly, to remain vigilant of their surroundings. Chief Wright noted that students who feel uncomfortable traveling through town can always contact the police department for support. He said, “I am hopeful that this incident, or these two incidents, don’t deter the Choate community from coming into the downtown area.”

“IT’S OKAY TO BE WHITE” originates from white supremacist organizations, including the Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazi parties. According to *The Guardian*, “[The phrase] was appearing on white supremacist fliers as long ago as 2005.”

The incident is not the first manifestation of racial intolerance in Wallingford’s recent

past. According to the New Haven Register, “In 2001, Matthew Hale, head of the racist and anti-semetic group World Church of the Creator, held a rally in town. Two years earlier, white supremacist literature promoting a group founded by David Duke [former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan] was found posted on a bulletin in Town Hall.”

Chief Wright has stressed that these events do not represent the Wallingford community. “From my interactions with our community, [residents] have been firm in their belief that, first, they’re not going to tolerate this, and, second, there’s no room for it,” said Chief Wright.

Dr. Hinderlie urged students to contact a member of the Equity and Inclusion team, a trusted adult, or him if they feel uncomfortable about the incident or witness further acts of racism in town.

**Rachel Pittman** may be reached at [rpittman22@choate.edu](mailto:rpittman22@choate.edu)

For the 2013 - 2014 school year, Choate integrated the iPad program into campus life. Students traded in college-ruled notebooks for digital note taking programs like Notability, and training programs were held for teachers to facilitate the use of technology in the classroom.

In 2012 Mr. John Ford stepped down as Dean of Students after seven years. He was succeeded by Mr. James Stanley.

For the 2013 - 2014 school year, the International Relations and Modern Math courses were introduced to the curriculum.

In 2013 Mr. Joseph Scanio was appointed Program Director at the KEC.

In 2013 Mr. Stephen Farrell stepped down as Dean of Faculty after eight years and was succeeded by Ms. Katie Levesque.



# THE CHOATE NEWS



113<sup>TH</sup> MASTHEAD

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## Letter from the Editors

Everyone defines their decade differently. Over the last ten years, you may have gotten three feet taller, let your hair grow five feet, or spent the decade writing your own *Gone With the Wind*. Maybe you graduated middle school, or maybe you watched your adorable toddler grow into a formidable pre-teen. You blinked somewhere around 105,177,000 times, used the bathroom 29,200 times, spent 32,850 hours fast asleep, and probably whiled too many hours away trading Silly Bandz, getting a bad ombre, or preparing for the end of the world in 2012.

If anything links our varied experiences, it's that this decade was one of change. Ten years ago, notepads, taxis, and MySpace flourished, while iPads, Lyft, and Instagram were unheard of. We editors of *The Choate News* had barely entered second grade — and look where we are now!

Choate today barely resembles the institution it was in 2010. In the past decade, several signature programs — in topics ranging from Middle Eastern studies to government, robotics to the environment — were created. The construction of the Kohler Environmental Center, Lanphier Center, St. John Hall, and Colony Hall were transformative in bringing the community together — literally and metaphorically. This decade also saw three Deans of Students, starting with Mr. John Ford, then Mr. James Stanley, and finally, current Dean Mr. Michael Velez.

Now a familiar face, Dr. Alex Curtis was appointed Headmaster in 2011 and later moved away from the connotation of the word “master” with a switch to the title “Head of School.” After being appointed, Dr. Curtis transformed the landscape of the Choate classroom by implementing the one-to-one iPad Program, which ushered in a new technology-oriented curriculum.

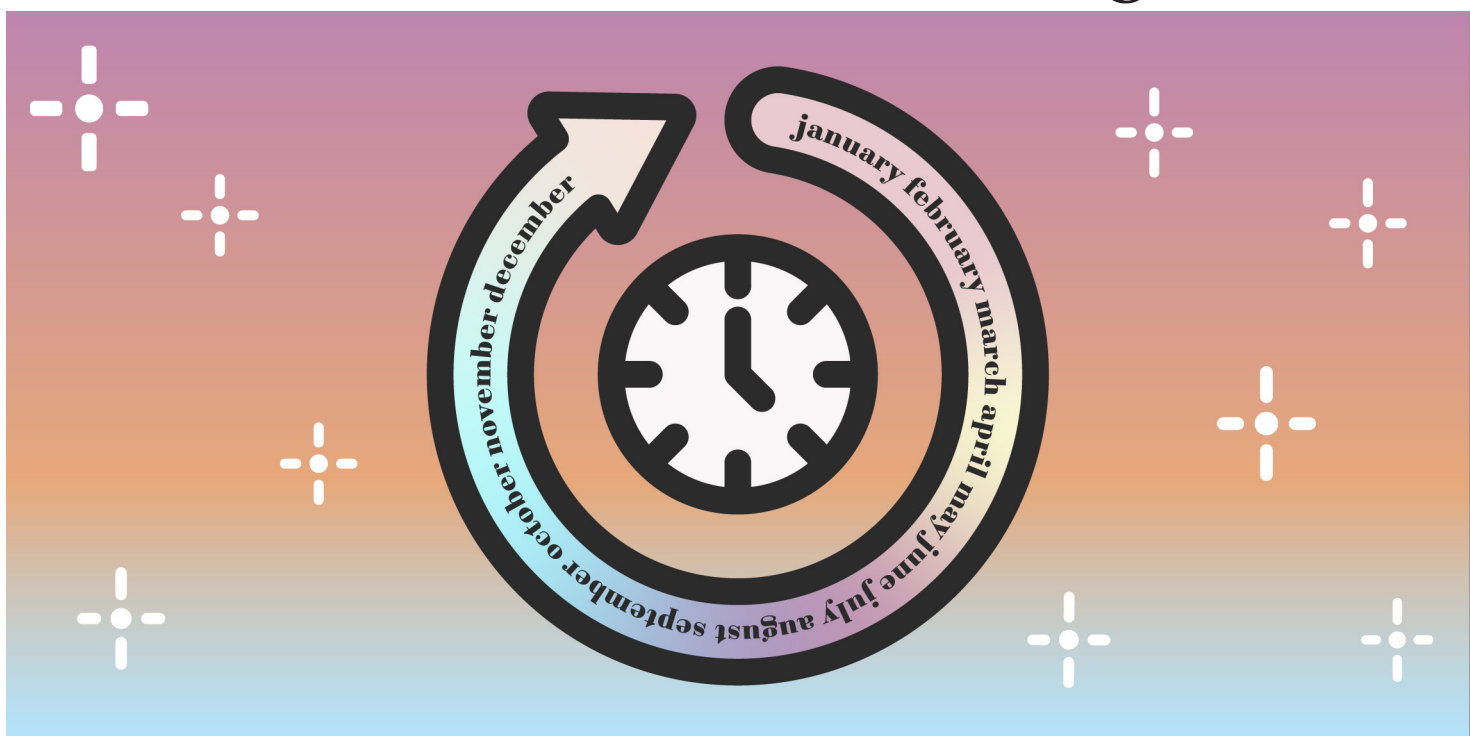
Shifts in our personal ideologies, cultures, and the physical environment around us have changed the way that we experience the world. Landmark moments of global solidarity such as the Climate Change Movement showed us that our generation has the capability of initiating global change. Human rights movements have led to turning points in U.S. policy, such as the nationwide legalization of same-sex marriage in 2015. War and violence around the world have destroyed communities, challenging our ability to cope with and move on from loss and anguish.

It's important to reflect on the past ten years in order to both appreciate how far we've come and how far we've yet to go. While we as a global society have drastically digitized, we've also had to reconcile the costs of that overwhelming transition. There is an inevitable duality to progress, and we hope that this issue encourages you to ponder this complexity.

Where will we be ten years from now? Maybe human-kind will have launched its first successful journey into another galaxy. Or maybe rising sea levels and climate change-induced natural disasters will have wiped us off the face of the earth. Looking at how far and how quickly we've progressed in the last decade, any of these scenarios seems plausible.

So, we invite you to sit back and take this decade-themed issue as an opportunity to reflect. We editors at *The Choate News* hope you enjoy this commemoration of how far we — as a school and as individuals — have progressed, and perhaps more important, how much further we have to go.

## What Will 2020 Bring?



Graphic by Chandler Littleford/The Choate News

By Rachel Pittman '22  
Associate Editor

Going into 2019, my expectations were low. After all, 2018 had been long and hard, ending with my saying goodbye to many of my middle school friends. I was, perhaps unknowingly at the time, forced to wave goodbye to my life in Cheshire in exchange for something new: Choate. Though an accepting community full of bright people, Choate brought anxiety, reinvented personalities, and too many Saturday night *Survivor* marathons spent wondering what fun things everyone else was doing.

Then, 2019 hit. When the clock turned, my feet were cold, and I was reading an evidently insignificant book, as I am struggling to remember the title now. *God*, I thought, staring at the ceiling, *make me braver this year. Make me happier*. Usually, I pretended to be too good for New Year's resolutions — what difference did yet another revolution around the sun

make? If I wanted change, there was no point in waiting for the novelty of a ball dropping. Still, this year, I wanted more — this year, I wanted to live. Maybe there was some magic, after all, in everyone (or at least everyone within Eastern Standard Time) celebrating the New Year together.

I'm not sure if it was my hesitant indulgence in New Year's resolutions or the growth that comes with time, but 2019 was one of my best years yet. Even around new people, I tried to be my fullest, punny self, and when I didn't know who that was, I let my instincts guide me. I didn't force friendships, but chose to surround myself with people who didn't care if I stared into space in the middle of a conversation, randomly panicked over not being able to remember a song title, or spontaneously recited unrelated movies quotes during stretches of silence. I embraced embarrassment, laughing it off when I forgot the dance moves to a camp song in front of summer campers and their parents. I learned to walk by myself on the path.

And when things were hard, as they inevitably were, I handled them well. Actually, no — I didn't handle them that well. I wish I could say that I did, but I didn't — despite how well the year went, I still spent many nights in front of chemistry worksheets in tears, on the verge of hyperventilation.

I cared about school and my weight and the Future with a capital “F,” and when thoughts of these things became too much, I broke down, scared of whether they were worth wasting my life on. I found myself watching my favorite movie *When Harry Met Sally* differently. Suddenly, the fact that Harry and Sally went to the University of Chicago stressed me out. The lines, “And I'm gonna be forty! —When?— Sunday. —In eight years! —But it's there! It's just sitting there like this big dead end,” weren't funny anymore. It was scary: I, too, was going to be forty! In 25 years, yes, “but it's there!” I suppose that it all boils down to the fact that I'm scared of time. And scared of how I'm using it.

So, where does that leave me for next year? As the next unit of 366 days waiting to expire paces in the wings, I worry that 2020 will take advantage of me. That I will go through the motions, never really doing anything meaningful, never truly aligning my priorities with my actions. I suppose, then, that leaves me with a goal — or at least a place to start. I will try to take full advantage of my constantly deteriorating supply of seconds. To be grateful for each one, even the tough ones. I will try to prioritize myself and love myself enough to prioritize what I find most valuable. After all, this is the beginning of not only a year but a decade as well. It is an opportunity to unpack a new calendar (or ten calendars!) of possibilities. Thank you in advance, 2020, for both the challenges and memories you will bring me. It's going to be great.

Rachel Pittman is a fourth-former from Cheshire, Conn. She may be reached at rpittman22@choate.edu

## ENGLISH CURRICULUM, THOU NEEDETH TO CHANGETH!

By Natarsha Yan '21  
Opinions Staff Writer

At Choate, classes are the surefire way to initiate discourse among students. Whether you're watching the sunset from a table in the back corner of the freshman section of the dining hall or walking down one of Choate's many paths, a parley on AmStud's overwhelming reading or Calculus BC's latest assessment always seems to find a way into daily conversation. However, of all the courses offered on campus, English seems to be one of the least appreciated and discussed.

I have always loved English class: I love the freedom and exhilaration of placing pen on paper, the simultaneous spilling of stories and ink, and the sense of fulfillment I always get after a particularly provocative class discussion. Moreover, the structure of the English curriculum ensures students' exposure to a broad range of genres, perspectives, and voices. We learn to write thesis-driven essays, short stories, and sonnets all within the span of a year. While this diversity of exposure is valuable, it also prevents students from fully exploring and developing their skills in particular areas of interest.

The School should open up English electives to juniors. This would give students ample



Graphic by Stella Dubin/The Choate News

time to cover all the fundamentals while also allowing them to fully pursue and master their specific domains of interest. This would be immensely beneficial for both students and teachers alike, as it also gives increased opportunities for teachers to teach the topics they are most passionate about and knowledgeable in, thereby making class much more insightful and engaging for both parties.

Furthermore, I believe that having even smaller classes would greatly improve the English curriculum. While classes with an average of eight to twelve students do allow for greater variety in perspectives and experiences, they also tend to generate less meaningful discussions. Students usually don't feel as comfortable sharing more intimate ideas or personal experiences

when placed in larger groups, and this counteracts the original goal of fruitful debate and discussion. In fact, a study in the *Journal of Educational Sociology* found that smaller discussion class sizes — the smallest group in the study was four students — produced higher student satisfaction. Creating even smaller classes, however, may be difficult to accomplish immediately, as there is a limited number of faculty and rooms in the Humanities Building.

With less standardized English curricula and smaller, more intimate

classes, English at Choate could become much more rewarding.

Natarsha Yan is a fifth-former from Shanghai. She may be reached at nyan21@choate.edu

In February of 2015, the Cameron and Edward Lanphier '74 Center for Mathematics and Computer Science opened. It houses the Math Department, robotics lab, i.d. Lab, and various other multidisciplinary, STEM-based courses. With Choate's first multi-purpose i.d. Lab featuring a woodworking shop, 3D printers, laser cutters, and a connected robotics suite, the Lanphier Center breathed new life into Choate's STEM department.

In 2014, the Statement of Expectations was released to reaffirm Choate's responsibility to promote a culture defined by integrity, honor, good decision-making, and ethical behavior.

In 2015, the Office of Institutional Research was created with Mr. Corey Wrinn as Director. The office's goal is to guide and inform the School on strategic planning in admissions, financial aid, curriculum, assessment, enrollment management, student life, and alumni relations.

Choate celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2015 with more than 2,200 alumni, parents, and friends gathering in fifteen locations around the world.





By **Sabahat Rahman '21**  
*Opinions Staff Writer*

I moved to Saudi Arabia in 2012. As an expatriate coming from the United States, the differences between American and Saudi society were glaring. In Saudi, women's rights were far behind those of almost every other nation. The country itself was barred to any tourists, except to those visiting for religious purposes, and things I took for granted (like cinemas) were banned.



Photo courtesy of TIME

When I think about something remarkable that happened this decade, I know I want to talk about my home: Saudi. As I reflect upon my time in the nation, I realize that I moved there at an exceptional time. Within the span of seven years since my move to Saudi, I witnessed some of the most radical changes the country has seen in its entire history. Women are now allowed to drive, jog outside, go out without a man, and vote in municipal elections. The nation's first ever cinemas are open, BTS and Pitbull have performed in the large cities, and construction for a theme park 2.5 times as big as Disney World is underway. These are only a few of the changes that Saudi has seen in this exceptional decade, and I cannot wait to see what will happen in those to come.



Photo courtesy of The Atlantic

In 2018, the March for Our Lives movement began.

By **Niki Gummadi '21**  
*Associate Editor*

The most important thing that has happened in the last decade is not a single moment or invention, but a movement. In the past ten years, there has been a wave of youth activism, and this has led to change from a microscopic to a macroscopic level.

In my hometown of Ocala, Florida, the year 2016 saw a student-coordinated rally in response to a transgender bathroom ban put in place by the local school board. After a tragic shooting in 2018, students in my home state refused to be complacent and were able to mobilize young voters like never before, leading to a 12% increase in Florida's youth voter turnout. The prominent March for Our Lives movement arose from students victims of the shooting at Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Students in Ferguson, Mo., flooded the streets after the death of Michael Brown, one of their peers. These protests started the nationwide Black Lives Matter movement. Young people in 2019 were able to command global attention with the formation of the Youth Climate Movement and the organization of worldwide climate strikes. The political issues of the past ten years have been defined by the youngest generation, and I have faith that the next ten will be, as well.

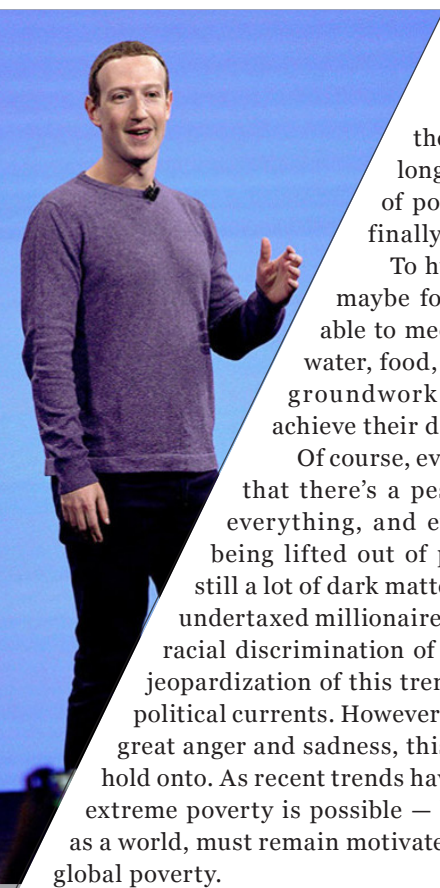
By **Julian Hurley '22**  
*Opinions Writer*

In the past decade, the internet has become significantly more vital and intrinsic to everyday life. In 2019, according to *Pew Research Center*, 96% of American adults own a cell phone of some kind, and 81% own smartphones.

The increase in internet usage brought an increase in non-consensual data collection. Many Americans feel that their personal data cannot be protected in this new digital era. Sixty-two percent of American adults believe that it is impossible to go through everyday life without companies collecting their data, and 84% say that they have little to no control over the data that the government collects.

After Facebook's Cambridge Analytica scandal, in which Facebook gave data to third parties without user consent, users' trust in social media platforms was shaken. In the coming decade, new standards for privacy and security must be implemented to avoid any future cybersecurity threats.

Photo courtesy of The Wrap



In the past decade, we have reached an all-time low for the global poverty rate. This is the result of a massive 25-year-long effort that has seen more than a billion people pulled out of poverty, and it is a reflection of a new global order that is finally beginning to consider those at the bottom.

To humanize this statistic, this means that around the world, maybe for the first time in generations, 7 billion people are now able to meet a basic threshold of livelihood. They are able to afford water, food, shelter, and other basic goods. Above all, they can lay the groundwork for freedom to achieve their dreams.

Of course, every realist knows that there's a pessimistic side to everything, and even with people being lifted out of poverty, there is still a lot of dark matter to point to: the undertaxed millionaires, the gender and racial discrimination of poverty, and the jeopardization of this trend with changing political currents. However, in a time of such great anger and sadness, this is something to hold onto. As recent trends have shown, ending extreme poverty is possible — but to do so, we, as a world, must remain motivated to fight against global poverty.

## What was the most important event of the decade?

By **Stephanie Chen '23**  
*Opinions Writer*

The past decade has been a tumultuous ten years. From the increasingly polarized political stage to the rapid onset of climate change to the (statistically speaking) 31 national emergencies currently facing the United States, it seems that the course of our future is all downhill from here. However, even with this constant influx of tragedies, there has actually been quite a lot of positive news stories this decade, and one in particular is worth remembering, especially in our darkest moments — like the rapid deterioration of our climate.

In the past decade, we have reached an all-time low for the global poverty rate. This is the result of a massive 25-year-long effort that has seen more than a billion people pulled out of poverty, and it is a reflection of a new global order that is finally beginning to consider those at the bottom.

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Also in the fall of 2016, following a student council proposal, the School's dress code was revised by Dean of Students Mr. James Stanley, allowing students to wear clothes that are "consistent with the School's values." Previously, the academic dress code had not allowed sweatshirts, sweatpants, denim, and any form of athletic wear.

By **Pranav Pendri '22**  
*Opinions Writer*

The most important events in the 2010s were American President Donald Trump's P 'oo summits and meetings with Kim Jong-Un, dictator of North Korea. Former President George W. Bush famously referred to North Korea, an autocracy sandwiched between China and South Korea, as a member of the "Axis of Evil." His declaration was in part due to the communist country's subjugation of its citizens, but it also referred to North Korea's nuclear capabilities. North Korea is believed to have between 20 and 60 nuclear bombs, enough to vaporize cities containing millions of people.



Photo courtesy of CNN

On June 12, 2018, Trump met with Kim in Singapore, where the two signed an agreement calling for stability and peace. They met again in Vietnam, but on June 30, 2019, Trump, at the request of Kim, became the first American president to step foot in North Korea. Trump and Kim's meetings foreshadow a more harmonious future without the threat of nuclear weapons. I am optimistic that North Korea will act with clairvoyance and proceed further with denuclearization.



Photo courtesy of TIME

Throughout the 2010s, the global climate strike movement expanded.

By **Mealy Cronin '23**  
*Opinions Writer*

The 2010s — a decade which saw the rise of limitless streaming television; a decade when Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, and YouTube emerged as the primary means of communicating and disseminating information — ushered in an era in which the farcical became reality, facts became suggestions, and fakes and liars rose to positions of power or created multi-billion-dollar companies. From politics to industry, culture to climate, the 2010s set a course where the axiom was nothing is as it appears, no one was as perfect as they seemed, and no one could trust anyone.

There was much to despair over in the past decade: climate events causing catastrophic tsunamis and earthquakes, mass shootings at home, and terror attacks abroad. And while so much was terrible in the past decade, there remains a glimmer of hope for the next ten years. In the past year, a growing youth movement has risen to challenge the status quo in the areas of climate policy, gun violence, and civil rights for all.

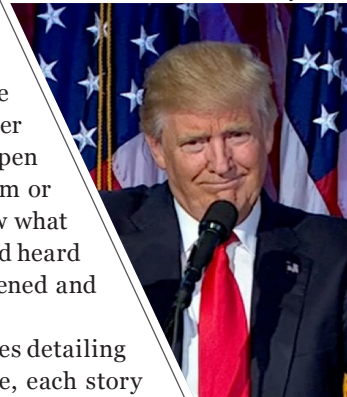
The decade began with the lingering effects of 2008's financial crisis felt around the world and may end with the impeachment of a U.S. President for only the fourth time in history. More than anything, the 2010s brought change — good and bad.

By **Wesley Boatwright '22**  
*Opinions Writer*

The American 2010s was a decade defined by change, none more important or more harrowing than the transformation of American politics. The election of President Donald Trump P 'oo in 2016 revealed the deep anger bubbling in the United States heartland. Trump capitalized on a rage felt by the Americans left behind by previous politicians, preaching that their lives, like America, would be "great again." Most terrifying of all, the political landscape in the U.S. transformed, and it now no longer requires the truth. Trump rode a wave of misinformation and lies straight to the White House, and he now believes that he is invincible.

The shift in American minds, from valuing the truth to believing that it doesn't matter, is the most significant development of the decade. Voters grew to be so devoted to their beliefs that no matter what their own side does, the opposing side is worse. rump forged a chasm, dividing the country in two. History will remember the next decade by how the country recovers in a post-Trump era. The 2010s, for better or for worse, is the decade of Donald Trump.

Photo courtesy of CNN



By **Sydney Alleyne '23**  
*Opinions Writer*

On December 14, 2012, a tragic shooting took place at Sandy Hook Elementary School, killing 26 children and teachers. Soon after, United States congressmen looked to change and prioritize gun legislation, while the National Rifle Association advocated to have armed guards placed in all American schools. This catastrophe was the first of many school shooting massacres that would soon plague the decade.

Since the Sandy Hook Massacre, there have been more than 50 shootings of similar caliber; each one gave our nation yet another reason to improve its gun reform policies and gun safety laws. Still, nearly 12 years later, the parents and family members of the victims of Sandy Hook are fighting for justice, most recently with some families receiving a 2021 trial date to argue their landmark lawsuit against Remington Arms Co., the company that produced the gun that killed their children.

Growing up 45 minutes from Newtown, Conn., the town where the shooting occurred, I deeply felt the effects of the shooting. I remember going back to school the following Monday and not being able to open the doors. The only way to open them was via an intercom system or with a special key fob. At the time, I was in first grade, but I knew what was going on. This was the first time in my life that everything I had heard on the news became real, and I truly understood what had happened and its horrifying implications.

Now that I am in high school, I have grown up reading headlines detailing how more and more teenagers are falling victim to gun violence, each story instilling more fear within me. It has grown to the point where I no longer feel fully safe in public areas, and I'm always going through the "what ifs" in my head. What if tomorrow I wake up and see that there was a shooting at the school my best friend goes to? What if my mom gets a phone call saying that the hospital my father works at is on lockdown due to an active shooter? For me, and many of my peers, all of this insecurity started after the shooting at Sandy Hook — when we first saw kids our age affected by such a situation. Gun violence has defined this decade; the Sandy Hook school shooting was the first of many, and it brought gun reform to the forefront of American politics and conversation, which is slowly but surely leading to change for the better. Perhaps the upcoming court case in 2021 will bring more of this change.

In the fall of 2016, form deans were degendered.



In the fall of 2016, the Office of Equity and Inclusion was founded in order to spark conversation and provide greater support on problems surrounding diversity and inclusivity. Dr. Keith Hinderlie was appointed Director of Equity and Inclusion.



## ELEVENTH TIZ THE SEASON BRINGS ANNUAL HOLIDAY CHEER

By **Begum Gokmen '23**  
*Reporter*

With the holidays just around the corner, the Choate community dove into the festive spirit with its 11th annual Tiz the Season gathering on Wednesday. Everyone on campus was invited to share their excitement over good food and each other's company. Though the gathering is known as one of the most beloved events on campus, the history of Tiz the Season still remains a mystery to some.

Tiz the Season dates back to Mr. Marquis Tisdale's first year at Choate. "I saw a need to brighten up people's spirits during these few weeks between Thanksgiving and the Holiday break," said Mr. Tisdale, the mastermind behind this event. After running his idea by then Dean of Students Mr. John Ford and asking to "steal" the last school meeting block before Holiday Break, Tiz the Season was born.

"I had a single table set up outside of Hill House with do-



Eleven years ago, Mr. Marquis Tisdale started Choate's beloved Tiz the Season community event.

nut holes, hot chocolate, and some music playing on a little speaker I bought," Mr. Tisdale said. "My goal was to create a little piece of time where students and faculty could get together and not think about academics or stressful things on their minds." Although the event's main focus is to relieve

the high stress levels on campus during the final week before break, Mr. Tisdale noted that it is also a great opportunity to appreciate "every single person who gives their time to make this a better place."

In past years, in addition to snacks and hot chocolate available during the gathering,



Photos courtesy of Choate Flickr and Derek Ng/The Choate News

Mr. Tisdale has given out pencils personalized with a small quote reminding each person to "do good." He said, "When you do good, you feel good. That's the message." Shortly after the first appearance of the event, it quickly became one of the Choate community's favorite traditions.

Senior Raine Williams '20 has looked forward to the event every year. "It's a great time to come together as a community. I love getting to be around all of my classmates and teachers to destress during these hectic few weeks," she said. For her, it will be something she'll "greatly miss after graduating."

When it comes to the organization of Tiz the Season, Mr. Tisdale said that he relies greatly on his wife, Mrs. KeriAnne Tisdale: "She has been incredible with her ability to see the bigger picture and to help me in everything that I want to accomplish with this large party for over 1,000 people." There are also many others who help out with the planning of the event, such as members of the Student Activities Center. Mr. Tisdale also highlighted the continuous support he received from Dean of Students Mr. Mike Velez and former Dean of Students Mr. James Stanley to put on the event.

"I love putting this event on for the community," Mr. Tisdale said. "It easily pays for itself thousands of times over with the sounds of laughter and the positive vibes that fill the air during the event. I hope that everyone dropped by TTS 2020 — if only for a few minutes — to smile, relax, grab a treat and a pencil, and say hello!"

**Begum Gokmen** may be reached at [bgokmen23@choate.edu](mailto:bgokmen23@choate.edu)

## Ms. Rachel Kesler Advocates for Native American Representation



Photo by Amitra Hoa/The Choate News

Ms. Rachel Kesler, Choate's only Native American faculty member, raises awareness for Native communities.

By **Bianca Rosen '21**  
*Associate Editor*

On December 3, Ms. Rachel Kesler delivered a speech at school meeting during which she tackled questions surrounding identity and the meaning of home. Ms. Kesler grew up in Arizona and is a member of the Navajo Nation. She explained that she began to unpack her identity as a Native American while studying at Dartmouth, which has a strong representation of native people. Ms. Kesler majored in Native American studies, developing new understanding about what it means to be a native woman: "I really began to interrogate what this identity means to me, especially with things happening in the news — like a new administration coming in which has a different understanding of Native American political rights. That's when it became an important identity for me to recognize, own, and be able to speak to."

Out of college, Ms. Kesler hoped to share her love of education because it was incredibly important to her self-discovery. Ms. Kesler liked the idea of becoming a teacher: "Teaching felt like a cool way to continue my education and to give something back." Hav-

ing heard about Choate from a close friend, she started to learn more about the community. Ms. Kesler was impressed by Choate's discussions surrounding privilege and diversity and the School's constant desire to keep the student body informed and aware.

Upon coming to Choate, Ms. Kesler was passionate about getting to know the School and finding her place within it. On campus, she teaches U.S. History, coaches J.V. Field Hockey, and advises in Library. Although she is still orienting herself to campus and getting accustomed to the general rhythm of Choate life, Ms. Kesler feels a special connection to the community.

During the talk she delivered at school meeting, Ms. Kesler described home as a community that brings out your best self — challenging you to take risks, love, and laugh. "Home is where I don't have to think about who I am. In some cases, that might be me at home baking with my mom and having a good time." She went on to pose the question: "What does a community look like when we are all empowered to be our best selves?"

For Ms. Kesler, it's important to create a community receptive to all kinds of iden-

tities. Ms. Kesler struggles to balance her identity as a Native American with the pace of our contemporary world. And as the only Native American faculty member at Choate, she at times feels that it is her job to speak up for Native American people, especially in situations in which they are ignored. She noted that this can be extremely difficult, especially since she is far away from home, because speaking up can be isolating.

In her talk, Ms. Kesler also brought up issues that Native Americans face that many people are not aware of. For instance, Thanksgiving is viewed by many Americans as a time of celebration; however, it can remind indigenous people of a time when they were regarded as barbarous and uncivilized. In addition, there are often Halloween costumes that demean native cultures. Ms. Kesler mentioned in her speech that studies have shown that this has unleashed a wave of depression and anxiety within Native American communities.

Ms. Kesler hopes to continue to raise awareness for Native American communities. She hopes to be a source of support and help in order to strengthen the Choate community.

**Bianca Rosen** may be reached at [brosen21@choate.edu](mailto:brosen21@choate.edu)

## How Wellness Classes Have Evolved Over The Years

By **India Lacey '21**  
*Staff Reporter*

Educating more than eight hundred teenagers coming from diverse backgrounds on their mental and physical wellbeing presents no easy task. At Choate, this program has come to be known as the Wellness program, and as time has passed and students have changed, the program has also grown.

Previously, Choate facilitated a two-term course known as Sophomore Seminar. When reviewing the program, faculty found that the two terms interfered with the cohesion of the course, as the students took it at different times throughout their sophomore year. Dr. Holly Hinderlie, the School's Wellness Coordinator, explained that having the Health Center staff run the program occasionally led to scheduling conflicts.

"Most of those who work in the Health Center are extremely busy doing medical care, so it was quite likely to have days where kids were coming in with the flu virus and class would have to be cancelled," said Dr. Hinderlie.

Sophomore Seminar course topics included safe sex, mental health awareness, and time management skills. The seminar included worksheet activities and group discussion. Each Sophomore Seminar class consisted of about twenty students in the fourth-form.

Senior Isabelle So '20, a member of the last class to take Sophomore Seminar, remembered that it was "helpful to a certain extent. I definitely learned a lot of new ideas about health and wellness, and before coming to Choate I wasn't exposed to that. Being able to understand more about mental

health and how to cope with it really helped me."

So found the program beneficial but sometimes wished that it went more in-depth on certain topics and that it continued past sophomore year, "I think it's important to have something between junior and senior year. I just don't remember a lot of it. Some knowledge stayed with me, but I think it would be nice to have a refresher."

Those teaching and running the program felt the same. A committee of faculty, including members of the Health Center, had a series of discussions that led to the creation of the revamped program that is currently in place.

The current Wellness program lasts for all of the years of a student's time at Choate. Since most students' schedules are crammed full of courses, the committee was careful to develop a program that wouldn't be too overwhelming. There are fewer meetings than in the previous system, which met about once a month.

Students are placed in groups of ten to fifteen, which remain the same for the entirety of the program to ensure that trust can be developed within the group. "We thought if we want kids to be having deep conversations about sex, drugs, or mental health, or things that are difficult, we've got to put some consistency," Dr. Hinderlie said. "Most of the program is concentrated in the first two years, to make sure that students are receiving the strategies and information as early as possible."

There is now a wider group of leaders facilitating the program, including student peer educators. Violetta Lacey '23 said that she appreciated having a fellow student

as a mentor: "I like being taught by another student because it makes it easier to express our opinions."

The faculty also now include a broad range of volunteers from all departments. "I like to think that wellness is broadly owned now by the larger community, rather than having teachers come from one small segment," Dr. Hinderlie said.

Overall, the program has received positive feedback from the student body. Lacey said, "We had one day concentrated on finance and budgeting, which was interesting. It opened my eyes to complications after we get out of school and how to manage my money."

It has been a long and complicated process to entirely re-work the wellness program, and the committee has been working hard to incorporate feedback, especially in these first few years. At the end of every spring term, each student is given a survey to fill out where they can explain the things they enjoy about wellness and what changes they might suggest. The committee then works to implement these changes over the summer. One of these changes happens to be the implementation of student leaders like the Peer Educators, which the current fifth-form advocated for after their first year of the program.

Dr. Hinderlie believes the biggest accomplishment of the program is the fact that it is a working course that has been totally redone.

Looking ahead, the committee plans to make further changes and adjustments as the student body advises them. Dr. Hinderlie outlined a few potential future shifts: "My sense is that we could make changes to the fifth- and sixth-form program, so the committee is going to be thinking about what that might look like. I'd like to see it be a program that feels useful to the students, that it's really meeting their needs."

Although the current program is not a finalized version, the wellness program has evolved over the past few years. The reliance on student feedback and support, as well as the leadership of many members within the Choate community, seems all but certain to ensure that the program will continue to develop.

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**In April of 2017, St. John Hall opened, providing the Choate community with another hub for socializing, studying, and more. St. John Hall's purpose is to be accessible and convenient for the student body. The building meets all of students' day-to-day needs: its Tuck shop sells finger foods; a new School Store sells basic necessities, snacks, and merchandise; and study rooms house club meetings and collaborative work.**

**In August of 2017 the School released two sexual misconduct reports that were first strengthened and reinforced by Dean of Students Mr. James Stanley.**

**In the fall of 2017, Dr. Holly Hinderlie was appointed as Wellness Coordinator, a position newly created to oversee the School's sexual misconduct prevention and response efforts, as well as educate the community on wellness.**



**In the spring of 2017, the School Seal prize, the William Gardner and Mary Atwater Choate Award, and the Rassweiler Prize were dedergered.**



## Student Choreographers Explore Movement Through Works of Famous Choreographers

By **Bianca Rosen '21**  
Associate Editor

Colony Hall was alive with energy and celebration on December 7 and 8 as Choate students, families, and faculty trickled in to see the Student Choreographers Showcase (SCS). Students taking part in the Dance Composition class, along with a group of dancers working independently throughout the fall term, choreographed and performed a collection of 12 dances. Students were assigned a contemporary choreographer to study and observe, then prompted to create a dance that used a set of the choreographer's techniques and ideas. The pieces experimented with the restrictions and freedoms of movement, the duality of expression, and the idea of the mundane interacting with the surreal. SCS highlighted many areas of the dance spectrum, leading viewers to question the complexities of even the simplest movements.

Mia Millares '22's *Sunlight in Early Spring* opened the showcase. The piece was modeled after the work of American choreographer Mark Morris, who was renowned for how he intertwined his music with his movements and danced to the rhythm. Millares explored the idea of weightlessness, youth, and bliss. Jenny Guo '21 and Laura Jiang '21—the dancers in



Photo by Nate Krauss/The Choate News

From ballet to flamenco, SCS featured a wide range of dance styles.

the piece—emphasized connection through soft movements.

Emily Goodwin '21 and Madison Lee '22, for their piece *Again*, researched Belgian choreographer Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker. Keersmaeker has a reputation for keeping the audience on their toes; she works with timing and simplistic movements, exploring the elegance in something minimal. Goodwin and Lee performed en pointe, creating shapes and angles with their movements. Mid-piece, the two untied their pointe shoes as a way of ques-

tioning femininity in society. Ballet has a very feminine and graceful connotation, immediately pushing ballerinas to uphold that sense of perfection. Goodwin states, "There's so much more to a ballerina's look. But this idea is so ingrained in society, so we can't completely remove ourselves from the stereotype. That's why we untie the shoes, instead of completely taking them off."

Di'Anna Bonomolo '20's piece *Just Keep Going* took inspiration from American choreographer Bill T. Jones, a

sociopolitical choreographer whose work told stories of his identity as a black, gay, and HIV-positive man. Bonomolo wrote a spoken-word poem and choreographed a dance surrounding it that focused on her experiences with mental health. She stated, "I was doing something so vulnerable in a form that I love." Bonomolo likes using poetry and words to plan out her dances and brainstorm her ideas. The showcase gave her the opportunity to combine the two. She liked being able to contrast her

movements with her words, balancing two mediums of communication.

Ethan Luk '20's piece *Ocotopus* captures the dance in everyday life, pinpointing the delicacy and grace in a mundane action. Luk modeled his piece after French choreographer Jerome Bel, who revolutionized conceptual and unorthodox dance. Luk's goal was to combine Bel's ideas with elements of traditional dance. Research was critical throughout his brainstorming process. Luk said, "If the work I create

is not rich in its research, then it doesn't do its job of moving people and creating an effect." Luk put together his research on Pinterest boards, collecting images of cities and pictures of Jerome's work in order to start visualizing the way the piece would manifest. He took inspiration from Yoko Ono's book *Grapefruit*. Each page in the book was a prompt. One of the prompts Luk looked at, "mirror piece," asked people to look at their face in the mirror and then look around the room at other people. Luk gave an assortment of these prompts to his dancers for them to react to. From there, he began to solidify his ideas for the piece, putting together phrases, scenes, and ideas. He ended up focusing the piece on his hometown, Hong Kong, investigating movement in metropolitan areas and the art within them.

SCS has pushed students out of their comfort zones, challenging them with the task of embodying a professional choreographer's visions and adding their own personal and creative interpretation. Bonomolo said, "It's nice to see where people come from. They put their culture and identity into their pieces."

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## MAESTRO PHIL VENTRE ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

By **Angel Guo '22**  
Reporter

Over the past fifty years, Mr. Phil Ventre, Director of Orchestral, has cultivated a passionate community of musicians across Choate campus. Mr. Ventre comes from a long line of musicians, and music has played a central role in his own life. As a result, he aspires to "enrich my student musicians and faculty's lives with the very best musical performances by our orchestra, wind ensemble, and jazz ensemble."

Mr. Ventre joined the Choate faculty in 1970 and has worked tirelessly to create the best music program at Choate for all levels of musicians. From Chamber Orchestra, band, and Jazz Combo. Today, he conducts 74 musicians in Orchestra.

Mr. Ventre's commitment and thorough instruction has led Choate's instrumental ensembles to numerous accomplishments. Choate's orchestra has performed in countless international concert tours, competitions, and performances in Bermuda, Puerto Rico, twelve European countries, China, South Korea, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and the White House. Mr. Ventre said, "I shall cherish for a lifetime the memories of their sincere dedication to achieving their individual level of artistic excellence. These gifted and sincere young scholar-musicians have bonded together to create and to nurture a truly inspirational musical family!"

As Mr. Ventre begins his new journey outside of Choate, he said, "I encourage my gifted musicians to always have sincerity of purpose as they nurture their unlimited potential as a scholar and as a musician." He hopes students will cherish every moment at Cho-

ate as they perform with the outstanding music ensembles in our community and continue to inspire many beyond the Choate community.

### Incoming Faculty Marshall Mr. James Davidson

After Mr. Ventre's retirement in the spring, Mr. James Davidson will become the longest-serving faculty member on campus. Mr. Davidson has been a member of the Choate community for 43 years;

He started working in the Athletics department in the spring of 1976 before becoming a full time faculty member that same year.

Rather than viewing his seniority among Choate faculty as an accomplishment, Mr. Davidson simply enjoys his time at Choate, and will continue to do so in the years to come. As Mr. Davidson said, "It is when I stop and think about it, that it does seem unusual to have been one place for a long time." The vibrant and cohesive atmosphere at Choate makes every year for Mr. Davidson exciting and rewarding.

Over 43 years, Mr. Davidson witnessed Choate undergo vast changes. Choate has greatly diversified, both academically—in its ever growing class offerings—and demographically. Although our community has changed in many aspects, Mr. Davidson believes that the "positive and cheerful attitude amongst the students" has always been consistent. One of Mr. Davidson's goals is to work with students in sports, dorms, and classrooms to help them build on their strengths and to make them feel respected and appreciated.

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## THE 2010s IN MUSICAL PLAYBILLS

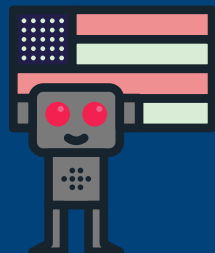


Graphic by Deanna Tan and Derek Ng/The Choate News

In 2018 the John F. Kennedy Program in Government and Public Service (JFK) also debuted. The five-term program was designed as a path for students with a strong interest in government, politics, philosophy, economics, and public service. The JFK Program gives students the opportunity to take a variety of related courses and engage in off-campus service experiences, which includes an internship over the summer. Mr. Ned Gallagher was appointed Director of the JFK Program.

In September of 2019 the new Ann and George Colony '72 Hall was officially opened to the Choate community. As a complement to the nearby Paul Mellon Arts Center, the new facility has enough space to house the entire student body for school meetings. Additionally, with a new studio and practice rooms, Colony Hall became the designated location for instrumental concerts and dance performances.

In 2018 the Advanced Robots Concentration (ARC) debuted. This program gave students the opportunity to pursue intensive immersion in robotics, resourced by signature classes, outside practices, and state-wide competitions.



In the spring of 2018, all Prize Day athletics awards were degendered.







New  
England  
Titles  
from the  
2010s

2010

Boys' Hockey  
Girls' Water Polo

2011

Boys' Basketball  
Boys' Rowing  
Girls' Water Polo

2012

Girls' Volleyball

2013

Girls' Soccer  
Girls' Volleyball

2014

Boys' Football

2015

Girls' Water Polo  
Boys' Football

2016

Boys' Football  
Girls' Water Polo

2017

Boys' Football  
Girls' Volleyball

2018

Boys' Basketball  
Boys' Football

2019

Boys' Track and Field

## WINTER SPORTS PREVIEW: KICKING OFF THE SEASON STRONG



Boys' Varsity Hockey faced off against Westminster on December 11.  
Photo by Jessie Goodwin/The Choate News

By **Greer Goergen '21**  
Associate Editor

### Archery

This year's Archery Team is led by Kiki Kim '20 and Jonathan Geller '20, and Geller said recently that archery is different from most sports because it is normal for many of the new team members to have never shot competitively before. "Even those on the team that are new to archery have made tons of great progress over the past couple weeks, and [my co-captain] Kiki Kim [20] and I look forward to seeing everyone develop their skills to be ready for our first meets when we come back from break," Geller said.

### Boys' Basketball

This year, Boys' Varsity Basketball is looking to have another strong season despite returning only three players. Co-captains Brody Grebe '20, Hayden Peek '20, and Ryan Zambie '20 hope to develop the team's chemistry and succeed in the postseason. "Our goal has always been to win a New England championship," Peek said. "Our coach preaches togetherness and accountability, which is a big part of our culture." The boys won three out of their first four games and are looking to win an early season title at the Sea Coast Classic over winter break.

### Girls' Basketball

Girls' Varsity Basketball underwent quite a few changes this

year. The team graduated seven seniors and welcomed a new head coach, Mr. Donta Johnson. Captain Betsy Overstrum '20 said, "We're very excited about the new talent that joins us. We're also adjusting to a new coach who brings a lot to the table, so it's an exciting start." She said that while the team is looking to advance as far as possible during their postseason tournaments, it is also important for the team to focus on each individual game and support one another both on and off the court.

### Boys' Hockey

Boys' Varsity Hockey is very different from last year. Captain John Russo '20 said the team is a little smaller yet more skilled. "We brought in a lot of guys this year who have contributed immensely to the team and will continue to be counted on as the season progresses." The newly assembled group will be tested early. "We have a tough Founders League schedule and the Lawrenceville Tournament we participate in every year ahead of us, so we need to do the small things right game in and game out," Russo said.

### Girls' Hockey

Girls' Varsity Hockey has started the season off strong by winning the first two games. The team has a large class of seniors, who will help create a supportive environment, but also recruited

a few underclassmen to develop. "Our mentality is team first," Captain Delaney Dill '20 said. "This mentality motivates us to compete and push each other to limits we couldn't reach [alone]." Dill said the girls constantly push themselves to do all that they can for the program, concluding, "I feel honored to play with these girls, and I have an immense amount of love for the program and my teammates."

### Boys' Squash

This winter, Boys' Varsity Squash is focused on winning Division Championships. Captain Sam Curtis '20 noted that the team consists of lots of strong players, including some talented underclassmen looking to take a step forward in their careers with the help of veterans. "This will for sure be an interesting season really just because it's wide open," Curtis said. "We are looking to have fun because in squash, when you are in the moment and calm, you play your best."

### Girls' Squash

Girls' Varsity Squash is won its first game and looking forward to yet another strong season. Meagan Best '20 said, "This year the team is looking great. We have won our first matches so far this season, so it seems our training has been paying off so far." Best believes that the team has the potential to win Division I Championships, New



Postgraduate Ryan Zambie '20 brings the ball up the court.  
Photo by Jessie Goodwin/The Choate News

England's, and possibly even Nationals this year. Best said, "I think the team has a great chance this year to have some pretty incredible wins and performances. Everyone has been training hard, so I'm excited to see how this season goes with the team."

### Boys' Swimming

Boys' Varsity Swimming returns much of its roster after graduating only three seniors last year. Many of the team's strong returning swimmers, including Jack Sun '21 and Ben Cho '22, have taken a step up. The team has aims to win Founders and improve on its finish at New Englands from last year. However, the boys are also focused on supporting each other and developing a distinct team culture. "Everyone on the team is strong in their own way. Winning isn't everything," co-captain Parker Scott '20 said. The team will use practices and dual meets to prepare for its championship meets in March.

### Girls' Swimming

Girls' Swimming, led by co-captains Sarah McAndrew '20, Isabelle So '20, and Sam Scott '20, consider themselves to be a family more than a team and is excited for another great season. "Swimming is generally an individual sport, so something we focus on is getting into the mentality that this is a team sport and that you are working

hard every day at practice and in meets to score points for the team," McAndrew said. She emphasized that all of the swimmers have dedicated copious amounts of effort, with people even staying after practice to work on their stroke, starts, and turns.

### Diving

This year's Diving Team of five girls and four boys features both returning divers and newcomers who are quickly picking up the sport. The team is relatively small, so divers feel that they are able to get a lot of personal attention from Head Coach Mr. Ben Small. "It's pretty early to say how we're gonna do cause we're getting back into it and we have some new divers," said Matt Lee '20. "But the best thing about the team is that we're all really close friends."

### Wrestling

This year, the Boys' Varsity Wrestling Team has a somewhat smaller team and a lot of young wrestlers, so it will be a transitional year to further develop the underclassmen's skills. "Our goals as a team are obviously to win our matches, but since we have a smaller team we have a lot more individual goals and they range [in] skill level and experience," captain Cameron Polemeni-Hegarty '20 said.

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## When Athletics Director Mr. Ned Gallagher Handed the Reins to Mr. Roney Eford

By **Sam Anastasio '23**  
and **Alex Skrypek '23**  
Reporters

The decade has brought many changes to the Athletic Department, much of which stemmed from the introduction of a new Athletics Director, Mr. Roney Eford. At the beginning of the 2016 - 2017 school year, former Athletics Director Mr. Ned Gallagher, who had held the position for 21 years, stepped down to return to full-time teaching. The School then hired Mr. Eford to fill the job.

Mr. Gallagher's years as the Athletics Director, beginning in 1996, brought improvements to the quality of Choate's teams and athletic facilities. He came into the Athletics Department after an especially turbulent interscholastic season, in which Choate was "swept on Deerfield Day in 1995," Mr. Gallagher said. Immediately, he set to work "fixing athletics" for Choate, which included reviewing the recruitment process

and expanding the Worthington Johnson Athletic Center (WJAC).

"At the start of my tenure, most of the facilities needed updates and renovations," Mr. Gallagher said. He worked to expand the Hunt Tennis Center, refurbish the Remsen Arena with new locker rooms and an exterior, and renovate the Larry Hart Pool's deck. Mr. Gallagher also helped to establish the Eight Schools League, which includes Choate and fellow New England boarding schools such as Andover, Deerfield, and Lawrenceville.

Although Mr. Gallagher had a successful tenure as Athletics Director, he felt the need to return to teaching and bring a new perspective into the leadership of Choate Athletics. Mr. Gallagher expressed his desire to return to teaching and coaching individual sports to Head of School Dr. Alex Curtis, who then began the search for a new Athletics Director.

In 2017, Choate found Mr. Eford, a former overseas professional basketball player who had taught at Marquette University. Mr. Eford worked in professional basketball sports scouting and front office work in various sports. During his transition to Choate Athletics, he understood the necessity of "observation and garnering feedback from faculty and coaches before making any changes." Mr. Gallagher also helped him adjust to the job as he was still available at Choate to help.

After receiving requests from both students and parents on the issue of live streaming sports games, one of Mr. Eford's primary goals

as Athletics Director was to implement such a livestream service.

He had also previously helped bring live streaming to other schools similar to Choate and understood the desire for parents to be able to watch their children's games from their homes hundreds of miles away.

Another one of Mr. Eford's achievements as Athletic Director

In 2019, Varsity Football lost its first game in five years. Throughout the decade, the team maintained a 49-0 winning streak and won 5 NE Championships. The team dominated the New England league, embodying intensity and hard work. While the past season broke the team's winning streak, Choate Varsity Football remains confident that they can bounce back and bring home another NE Championship next season.

tor was to unify the Choate sports teams under one clothing brand: Adidas. "I wanted to find an all-school apparel deal based in equity that could provide JV, thirds, and varsity teams quality uniforms and team items just as much as any other team would."

Heading into the new decade, Mr. Eford strives "to continue to enhance and build upon the competitiveness of all of our teams and to continue to have our athletes improve and get better." Mr. Eford is continuing to build upon the strategic planning for the department.

From improving the athletic recruitment process to renovating Choate's sports facilities, the past decade has changed the School's athletics for the better and paves the way for another successful decade to come.

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2019 saw the trial of a new all-gender dorm in Combination House. Pioneered by Dean of Students Mr. James Stanley, Associate Dean of Students and Director of Residential Life Mr. Will Morris, and form dean Ms. Mb Duckett Ireland, the house was founded with the mission of creating a safe, inclusive residence for non-binary students and allies.

In 2019 Mr. James Stanley left the Dean of Students' Office to return to teaching. His position was filled by former third form dean Mr. Mike Velez '00.



In 2019 longtime Director of Student Activities Mr. Jim Yanelli retired. He was succeeded by Ms. Alex Long.